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General Assembly

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Human Rights Council
Twenty-eighth session
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

28/14. Human rights, democracy and the rule of law

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

Reaffirming also the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other relevant international human rights instruments,

Recalling the Millennium Declaration and all General Assembly resolutions on democracy and the rule of law,

Reaffirming its resolution 19/36 of 23 March 2012 on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights,

Taking note of the study of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights of 2012[1] and the outcome of the panel discussion,[2] held on 11 June 2013 during the twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council, both on the theme of common challenges facing States in their efforts to secure democracy and the rule of law from a human rights perspective,

Reaffirming that democracy is based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives,

Reaffirming also that, while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any country or region, and

[1] A/HRC/22/29.
[2] See A/HRC/24/54.

reaffirming further the necessity of due respect for sovereignty and the right to self-determination,

Bearing in mind that challenges to democracy arise in all democratic societies,

Acknowledging the fundamental importance of education and training for human rights and democracy in contributing to the promotion, protection and effective realization of all human rights,

Underlining that while States have the primary responsibility for safeguarding and strengthening democracy and the rule of law, the United Nations has a critical role in providing assistance and coordinating international efforts to support States, on their request, in their democratization processes,

Urging States to acknowledge the important contribution of civil society and human rights defenders to the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and to create a safe and enabling environment for their work,

Recognizing the value of a Human Rights Council forum for exchange, dialogue, mutual understanding and cooperation on issues related to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter, and acknowledging the importance of existing regional formats,

Stressing that human rights, democracy and the rule of law are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and in this regard taking note with interest of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities,[3] in which the Secretary-General addressed the ways and means of developing further the linkages between the rule of law and the three main pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, human rights and development,

1. *Decides* to establish a forum on human rights, democracy and the rule of law to provide a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to the relationship between these areas; the Forum shall identify and analyse best practices, challenges and opportunities for States in their efforts to secure respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law;

2. *Expresses* its expectation that the Forum will contribute to the efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to improve cooperation among United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes on activities related to the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, including at the regional level;

3. *Decides* that the Forum shall be open to the participation of States, United Nations mechanisms, bodies and specialized agencies, funds and programmes, intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations and mechanisms in the field of human rights, national human rights institutions and other relevant national bodies, academics and experts and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; the Forum shall also be open to other non-governmental organizations whose aims and purposes are in conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, based on arrangements, including Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, and practices observed by the Human Rights Council through an open and transparent accreditation procedure in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Council, which will provide for timely information on the participation of and consultations with the States concerned;

[3] A/68/213/Add.1.

4. *Also decides* that the Forum shall meet every two years for two working days allocated to thematic discussions;

5. *Requests* the President of the Human Rights Council to appoint for each session, on the basis of regional rotation, and in consultation with regional groups, a chairperson of the Forum from candidates nominated by members and observers of the Council; the chairperson, serving in his or her personal capacity, shall be responsible for the preparation of a summary of the discussions of the Forum, to be made available to all its participants;

6. *Requests* the High Commissioner to provide all the necessary support to facilitate the convening of the Forum and the participation of relevant stakeholders from every region in its meetings, paying particular attention to ensuring the broadest possible and most equitable participation, with due regard to gender balance;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner to provide the Forum with all the services and facilities necessary to fulfil its mandate;

8. *Decides* that the theme of the first session of the Forum, to be held in 2016, will be "Widening the democratic space: the role of youth in public decision-making".

56th meeting
26 March 2015

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 35 to 0, with 12 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Albania, Argentina, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Maldives, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Paraguay, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Algeria,* Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Cuba, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam]

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* The delegation of Algeria subsequently stated that there had been an error in its voting and that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft text.